

## Amazon Opens First Bookstore

Written by Bob Snyder  
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James Daunt, CEO of Waterstones in the UK, told the BBC he hopes Amazon's push into physical retailing "falls flat on its face." Daunt has also removed Amazon's Kindle from most of Waterstones' 280 stores.

You can hardly blame him. It seems ironic the webstore that enriched itself shuttering so many bookstores-- while crowing about the inefficiency of brick-built stores-- now turns to a physical presence as if it were an Amazon innovation.



More than 20 years ago, Amazon first rocked the book industry with its online sales, a digital disruption--specialized in books--that battered both bookstores and book publishing. In a short time Amazon captured about 25% of all books sold in the U.S. market.

Not just books. In 2007, Amazon unveiled **the Kindle**, an eReader that makes book reading a completely digital experience. And then the Fire Phone, the Fire TV, the Fire TV Stick, and Echo...

Today about 19.5% of all books sold in the U.S. are Kindle titles. E-books now make up around 30% of all book sales, and Amazon has a 65% share within that category (Apple has in books +1.65% and Barnes & Noble +7.14%).

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But Amazon also sells a broad range of products: art, lawnmowers, iPods, toys, 3D printers, diapers, shoes, gun safes, 3D printers. According to industry estimate, US book sales make up no more than 7% of the company's roughly \$75 billion dollars in annual revenue.

**And now Amazon opens its first-ever brick-and-mortar retail store:** Amazon Books. And the Amazon VP in charge, Jennifer Cast, says it is their first store but "We hope this is not our only one."

While Amazon has experimented with pop-up stores over the years to sell its Kindle devices (and replaced some bookstores on college campuses with pickup locations), this first store opened its doors in a shopping mall in Seattle. The company chose Seattle for its first physical bookstore because it's close to Amazon's headquarters and because Seattle is a top market for readers...

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With 551 sq m (5500 square feet) of retail space and 186 sq m (2000 square feet) of storage, the store is dedicated to books (although it does offers a test drive of Amazon consumer electronics devices such as Kindle, Echo, Fire TV and Fire Tablet).

**Amazon Books shop seems like almost any other upscale book store**—except it is distinct from traditional bookstores in only one big way. Every book faces out, rather than be stacked in rows with their facing out. Ordinary booksellers decided years ago that you turn to turn books sideways to fit in more books.

**That leaves far less space for books.**

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